

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LOUREN 00196 201019Z

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3278

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

CINCEUR

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LOURENCO MARQUES 196

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PROP, MZ

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH HIGH COMMISSIONER RE LOCAL PRESS
REPORTING ON U.S.

REF: LOURENCO MARQUES A-015

1. DURING CALL ON HIGH COMMISSIONER WITH AF/S DEPUTY DIRECTOR
ARENALES, WE DISCUSSED PROBLEM OF INCREASINGLY HOSTILE RE-
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PORTING ON U.S. IN LOCAL MEDIA (REFAIR). I SHOWED THE HIGH

COMMISSIONER SOME FRONT PAGE STORIES AND FULL-PAGE SPREADS ON ALLEGED "LACKEYS OF YANKEE IMPERIALISM" IN LATIN AMERICA, (E.G., BRAZIL) PLUS ARTICLES BY NOVOSTI EDITORIALISTS ON "CIA IN AFRICA, THE SINISTER FLIGHT OF THE VAMPIRES", ETC., ETC. I TOLD HIGH COMMISSIONER I WAS NOT MAKING A FORMAL APPROACH BUT SIMPLY BRINGING THIS MATTER TO HIS ATTENTION AND SEEKING HIS ADVICE. POINTED OUT THAT PLETHORA OF STRIDENT ANTI-US MATERIAL IN MEDIA WAS DISTURBING ON THREE COUNTS: (A) OVER PERIOD OF TIME UNSOPHISTICATED AFRICAN POPULATION COULD BECOME "MENTALIZED", WITH US AS ENEMY; (B) SINCE PRESS WAS PARTLY GOVERNMENT-OWNED, ARTICLES COULD BE MISINTERPRETED IN WASHINGTON AS REPRESENTING MTG POSITION; AND (C) ARTICLES GENERALLY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH MOZAMBIQUE.

2. ADMIRAL CRESPO ASSURED ME THAT HOSTILITY TOWARD US WAS NOT MTG POLICY AS MACHEL AND CHISSANO HAD MADE CLEAR TO THEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY EASUM. HE SAID LOCAL PRESS WAS REALLY QUITE OUT OF CONTROL, THAT OFFENDING JOURNALISTS WERE MOSTLY PORTUGUESE AND SEEMED BE TRYING TO REDEEM THEMSELVES BY BEING MORE LEFTIST THAN FRELIMO ITSELF AND BY WRITING WHAT THEY THOUGHT WOULD BE MORE PLEASING TO THEIR NEW MASTERS. HIGH COMMISSIONER SAID HE HIMSELF HAD FELT NEED TO POINT OUT TO FRELIMO GOVERNMENT THAT ANTI-SOUTH AFRICAN MATERIAL IN PRESS COULD AFFECT RELATIONS WITH SAG WHICH MIGHT TAKE THIS AS OFFICIAL ATTITUDE OF MTG. AFTER THAT, PRESS TREATMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA HAD IMPROVED, ALBEIT PERHAPS TEMPORARILY.

3. WHILE HIGH COMMISSIONER AT ONE POINT SAID HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING MATTER INFORMALLY WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, WE WERE LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS WOULD ONLY BE IN A GENERAL CONTEXT AND NOT SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE U.S. I REITERATED THAT I WAS NOT MAKING AN OFFICIAL APPROACH NOR REQUESTING ANY ACTION. WALKER

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